CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

Messrs. Editors—The following letters were placed in my hands for perusal. The letter of our limitarian friend, who is a very respectable member of the Reformed Dutch Church, breathes so much of the spirit of christianity—and the reply being of a similar character, (which by the by, too seldom characterizes theological discussions,) induces me to offer the correspondence for publication, in the Christian Messenger. The names of the writers are not given, as it is presumed the letters were not intended, originally, for publication. This circumstance, however, will not lessen the force of the argument on either side. With my ardent wishes for your success in the cause of universal benevolence, and in the hope that your interesting and useful publication may be properly appreciated and patronized, I subscribe myself yours in the best of bonds.

M. W.

New-Brunswick, N. J. Dec. 2, 1832.

Dear Friend—An acquaintance of upwards of thirty years, marked by an uninterrupted friendship, as far as I know, up to this time, must be my apology for writing to you on a subject, which has not heretofore been hinted at in our former correspondence. It is natural for friends to feel interested in each others welfare; and when a man sees his friend in danger of being injured, in his person or property, he will not fail to give him notice of it as early as possible, so that he may be on his guard, and prepare himself to ward off the threatened evil.

Our fathers, at the time our acquaintance commenced were about the age we are now. We then called them old men—where are they now! One has been sleeping in the dust for thirteen or fourteen years—the other is like a taper nearly consumed and flickering in its socket, ready to expire. These facts, besides other daily occurrences, are a convincing proof that we too are making rapid advances to dissolution; indeed we have the evidence depicted on our own persons, that old age is fast approaching. We have proceeded up the ladder of time from infancy to youth; then we stood on the top in full vigor of manhood: but now, the wrinkled brow and the hoary head admonish us that we are descending to the tomb. A few years at most must close our mortal career. The question naturally suggests itself, Are we prepared for the event? As far as respects our temporal affairs, perhaps we may answer in the affirmative. The Lord has blessed us both with an abundance of this world's goods; we have enough and to spare, and with the common blessings of providence, we need not be anxious on that score. But the solemn and interesting question is, are we prepared to render an account of our stewardship to our Lord, for the use we have made of the talents committed to our care? Have we appropriated them towards the advancement of his honor and glory upon the earth, or merely for our own gratification, in adding house to house and field to field?

My dear friend, if we believe in a future state of rewards and punishments as described in the Old and New Testaments, denominated the word of God, we must believe that we will be called upon to render an account of our stewardship at the bar of God. And if the all knowing and all seeing God should put the question to us—What have you done with the talents I committed to your care? what answer will we be able to give? Can we give a satisfactory answer? Or must we look for the sentence of the unprofitable servant, to be passed upon us, who put his Lord's money in a napkin and hid it in the earth. Our Lord has told us that "to him to whom much is given, from him much will be required." It is also said "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" These passages evidently show that man is an accountable creature; and if an accountable creature, what will be his fate when summoned to the judgment bar and cannot render a satisfactory account. You may read his fate in the 25th chapter of Matthew and 30th verse. The sentence there recorded is certainly sufficient to make us reflect on our own situation, and carefully examine whether we have been faithful stewards of the talents which God has committed to our care.

Perhaps we may say we have not let them lay dormant—we have traded with them and added to them double. But then, should the question be asked, What have you done to promote my cause and kingdom upon the earth? You have, it is true, husbanded the talents committed to your care, for your personal gratification, but what return have you made to me the giver of all those blessings which you enjoy? If you have neglected to employ them in the advancement of my honor and glory, and the building up of my church upon earth, you are an unfaithful and an unprofitable servant and shall be rewarded accordingly. Oh horrid fate—*outer darkness!* where the cheering rays of hope will never enter, and where wailing, weeping and gnashing of teeth will never cease. Oh my dear friend may we be saved from this awful state. And if we have not yet made our peace with God, and obtained an interest in Jesus Christ, the Savior of sinners, let us not rest until we have found him to be indeed our Savior and altogether lovely.

The present crisis is alarming. The pestilence is abroad in the earth—hundreds of our fellow immortals are falling around us, and we know not at what moment the arrow of the Almighty may be directed at us. Are we prepared for the stroke? Have we set our house in order? Can we say with the apostle "for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain?" If so, then can we face the king of terrors without dismay, and say to him strike, we fear thee not! But if on the contrary we have not been regenerated anew in Christ Jesus—if we have not been cleansed in the blood of his righteousness, if we are still in an unconverted state, unconcerned as to our future state and having our affections placed on things on the earth instead of things in heaven, then, indeed, may we tremble—our prospects are gloomy. Death—not only temporal death, but eternal death, awaits us with all its horrors, which tongue cannot describe or heart conceive—God forbid that this should be the case with either of us. * * * * * *

This letter you will perceive was commenced some time since, before the death of my father, and then suffered to lay by. This summer that dreadful disease, the cholera, has made its appearance in your immediate neighborhood, and has swept off a number of your acquaintances, among others, into the grave. And feeling anxious for your eternal welfare, and not knowing how soon you might be cut down by the destroying angel, I began to reflect whether I acted the part of a friend in withholding a communication from you, which under God, might be the means to bring you to inquire "what you must do to be saved;" especially as I have been informed that you stand on dangerous ground, depending on Universal Salvation, and have deserted the church of Christ. Now my dear friend, all I have to say to you on this subject is, "search the scriptures"—study them prayerfully, and if they do not convince you that God is just as well as merciful, and that he will by no means clear the guilty, then I will confess that they convey a different meaning to you from what they do to me. If this test will not do—then calculate your interest as you would in your worldly concerns and determine accordingly. If those who believe in a future state of rewards and punishment, and have an interest in Christ, are the only ones saved—where will the ungodly and the sinner appear? Whereas if the Universalist is right, then all others are equally safe with himself. My dear friend let me entreat you to lay these things seriously to heart. Time is short—delays are dangerous—death is certain—eternity—eternity is long and the object to be obtained is eternal happiness, or eternal misery—and oh! can we delay a moment in making our choice. Methinks I can see the tears and sighs of your affectionate wife, when on her knees in her closet supplicating her God in your behalf. And oh! may her prayers be answered, and may you be brought in the right way, convinced of sin, and converted to God, so that your soul may be saved, is the sincere prayer of your friend.

I have now performed what my conscience told me was my duty to my friend. You know I have no other motive than friendship. This, therefore, is my apology for troubling you with this communication. Farewell.

J. W.

REPLY.

Respected Friend—Your kind epistle of a distant date was duly received and merited an earlier reply. I deferred it in consequence of your ill health, but apologies are, however, unnecessary between old friends, and I now sit down to pen an answer. The interest you manifest on my behalf I regard not only as proof of the sincerity of your friendship, but also of the christian temper and feeling of your heart. He must feel a deep solicitude for the welfare of mankind, who is a disciple of Him, who once wept over Jerusalem, the city where he had, and was about to suffer all that human malignity could inflict. I rejoice to observe a similar spirit in yourself, and that you are disposed, with genuine christian candor and affection, to warn and exhort those you think out of the way.

Our acquaintance has been long and happy. But our feet are now treading the declivity of human life. "Our fathers, where are they?" We have seen them go down to the grave, and cannot but be sensible that we ourselves are fast following. A few years more at farthest, and our countenances too must change and we be sent away. The question arises, and it is one the most momentous and interesting ever asked by man, what shall be our state beyond the grave? That we shall *live again*, I most firmly believe. A future state of existence to me seems strongly intimated, and rendered highly probable, by the fact that immortality is so universally and ardently desired. The christian, the philosopher, and the savage, all manifest a similar anxiety on the subject, so that we may well conclude that a desire of future existence and a dread of annihilation are principles interwoven in our very being. But would a benevolent Being, as our Creator is known to be, have implanted such desires in our very nature if they were never to be gratified? There seems also another proof of future life derived from the consideration of the nature of the human soul. Capable of an ever growing knowledge and virtue, it appears to be designed for immortality, since it may forever be making advancement in holiness and consequent happiness. But these evidences, though perhaps among the best that nature or reason, unaided by revelatin, can afford, are still insufficient to satisfy the mind. It is in the scriptures alone that we find full assu-

rance of faith on this subject, for as the apostle Paul says, "Christ hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

The bible then recommends itself to our hearts as well as our understandings. The great truths it discloses are most important, and bear directly upon our hopes and our happiness. It contains what every man desires, and what, it seems to me every man would rejoice to receive, were it not for the perverseness of the human heart which prompts us to refuse the greatest blessings, and were it not for the melancholy fact that the pure doctrines of the bible are in a great measure even in this our day obscured by the traditions of men.

You, dear friend, have introduced the subject of religion. You have spoken freely your sentiments on the subject, and I am glad you have done so. You speak of my having deserted the church of Christ, and now standing on dangerous ground, depending on Universal Salvation. I fear that you have misapprehended the nature of Universalism. There are several remarks in your letter which lead me to this conclusion, and I beg you as a christian and a candid man, to hear me while I present you some of my views, and correct some of the mistakes into which I believe you have inadvertently fallen. Many christians speak lightly of Universalism. So Paul spoke lightly of christianity, and even persecuted christians, and yet he afterwards tells us that he did it *ignorantly in unbelief*. Suffer me to observe then, that Universalists believe in the scriptures, and receive them as their guide in matters of faith and practice. It is from the scriptures we learn the glorious doctrine of God's universal grace. It is there we learn that *God loved the world* and sent his son *to seek and to save that which was lost*.

Let us, my dear friend, look one moment at the chain of evidence, presented in the word of God, of the doctrine of Universal Salvation. Was it not intimated in that curse pronounced on the serpent in the garden of Eden? "It (the seed of the woman) shall bruise thy head." The head of a serpent is his vital part; bruise that and you destroy his life. Now if *the serpent* was, as is generally supposed, *the Devil*, we shall see how completely this curse is to be fulfilled. The seed of the woman is understood to be Jesus Christ our Lord. Paul says, Heb. ii, 14, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Christ] also himself took part of the same; that through death he might destroy death, and him that had the power of death, that is, *the devil;* and deliver them who through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage." The promised seed then shall bruise the *serpent's* head. Christ shall *destroy* the devil. Now do not suppose that this word *destroy* means nothing but to cast into hell, because if the devil fell from heaven he was at first cast into hell, and there would be no propriety in saying that Christ should *destroy* him, if he was to do no more than to cast him into hell where he was before. But if you will not allow that the devil shall be utterly and forever destroyed, which I think is plainly enough implied both in Genesis and Hebrews, you must be constrained to allow that Christ will despoil him of all his power and take away all his subjects. See Matt. xii, 29, where it is clearly taught that Christ had power to bind the *strong man and spoil his goods and house*. So that whether the devil be utterly destroyed or not, it is evident, if we believe the scriptures, that he shall possess eventually no power and no subjects. The whole family of man will then be happy.

Again look at the promise made to Abraham, and renewed to Isaac and Jacob, that in them and their seed *all the nations* of the earth should be *blessed*. The apostle Paul alludes to that promise in Galatians iii, 8, &c. "And the scriptures foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, 'In thee shall all nations be blessed.'" This *seed* of Abraham, the apostle tells us, *is Christ*. And there is this remark to be made on this passage, the promise of God to all nations in Christ is called the gospel, which corresponds exactly with the first announcement of our Savior's birth, Fear not for behold *I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people*. Now there is no *law* that can interfere with the accomplishment of this promise, for the apostle says again, "And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was 430 years after cannot disannul that it should make the promise of none effect." And now, my dear friend, let me ask you candidly, do you not believe the promise made to Abraham, that in his *seed*, which is Christ, all the nations of the earth shall be blessed? I cannot but think you do. And does it not teach Universalism? The nature and extent of this blessing you will see clearly set forth by Peter, Acts iii, 25, 26, "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of *the covenant*, which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall *all the kindreds of the earth* be blessed. Unto you first God having raised up his son Jesus, sent him *to bless you by turning away every one of you from his iniquities*." Turning away every one from his *iniquities*, is then the blessing of the promise—the blessing that was to be conferred through Christ on *all the kindreds* and *families* and *nations* of the earth. This is a kind of Universal Salvation, my good friend, which I know you would rejoice in. Is it not deserving our confidence? It is based on the promise of God—the immutable oath of Jehovah. If we cannot trust that what can we trust? I know too, that you will not think this Universalism either dangerous or licentious. The great blessing to be conferred, is to turn away every man from his *iniquities*—to inspire the heart with supreme love to God, and love to man. This is the only Universalism that I know or wish to have inculcated.

There are many other passages in the Old Testament, which I might quote, and which I think clearly expressive of the same glorious truth. Jesus Christ must be the light of the Gentiles and the glory of the people Israel. The heathen must be given him as his inheritance and the uttermost part of the earth as his possession.

But look one moment, my dear friend, at the teachings of our Lord himself. What character does he ascribe to God? Is it not that of a *Father?* And what a word! *A father!* It embraces all that is dear and tender, all that is lovely and kind. And God is *our* father. Not *mine*, or *yours*. in particular, but *ours*. "*Have we not all one father, hath not one God created us?*" So we can say in the language of inspiration. "Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not." We perhaps may not be the *characteristic children* of God, that is, we may not conduct in our sphere after his example, but still he is our father. To be his children we must "*love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us.*" This our Savior tells his disciples they must do in order to be the children of their *father* who is in heaven. Now mark you, the doing of these things alone could make them the characteristic children of whom? Why, of their *father*. Their doing this would not make God *their father*, for he was so before, and will be so forever, for he changes not, but they would become by such conduct the *worthy* children of God. They would do honor to their father. But how? They would *act* like him. Act like him? Yes. But does he love his enemies? Does he bless them that curse him? Does he do good to them that hate him? Yea verily, "for he maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." "*He is*, as our Lord himself says, *good to the unthankful and to the evil.*" If he was not, wherein would he be better than a publican or sinner? They love those who love them, and bless them that bless them. Christians must do more than this if they would be the children of *their father* who is in heaven. "If thine enemy hunger, says Paul, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink." We are too much disposed, my dear friend, to think that God does not love us when we are sinners, and that we must become righteous and love him in order to make him love us. This seems to me the very reverse of the scripture doctrine on this subject.—John, the beloved disciple, says, "*We love him*—not to make him love us, but—*because he* FIRST *loved us*. Here the love of God is assigned as the *cause*, not the *effect*, of our love. And this perfectly coincides with what the apostle Paul says, Rom. v, 6, 7, 8, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly; for scarcely for a righteous man would one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die: *But God commendeth his* LOVE *toward us, in that while we were yet* SINNERS *Christ died for us.*" "Herein," says John, "is love; not that we loved God, but that *he first loved us.*"

These glorious scriptures will help us, at once, to account for the coming and death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *God so loved the world*—God so loved *sinners*, that he sent his son *to die* for them and *to save* them. And may I not ask you, if these considerations do not tend directly to Universal Salvation? Will God love the *sinner* less to-morrow, or next year, or in the next world, than he does here and now? Remember he is the same and changes not. What he loves to-day he must love to-morrow and forever. Does he love his enemies to-day? He will forever love them. Does he bless them that curse him; must he not in some way or other bless them forever? These questions can have but one answer, if it be that God is *immutable*.

But you will possibly say as you have done in your letter, remember "that God is *just* as well as *merciful*, and that *he will by no means* clear the guilty." This is a remark always made against Universalism, but it arises from a misapprehension of the views of Universalists on this subject. Strange as it may appear to you, I dare affirm that no denomination of christians on earth believe more fully in the *justice* of God than Universalists. They regard his justice, it is true, as by no means incompatible with his mercy, and goodness. They believe that all his attributes must harmonize—that the exercise of mercy does not preclude the manifestation of justice, and on the contrary that God may be just and yet wanting not at all in mercy. You will allow me to be more explicit on this subject. Universalists, then, believe most sincerely all that the scriptures assert in regard to the *justice* of God. They believe that God *will by no means clear the guilty*—that he will reward every man according to his works—that "he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no respect of persons." They believe, of course, that if any man sin, no matter whether he be a christian or not, he shall receive a just punishment at the hand of the Lord. He will by *no means* clear the guilty. Now if these scriptures which I have quoted, mean any thing, they mean that there is no escape for the sinner from the demands of divine justice. And if we are deserving of endless punishment, we must suffer it. God will by *no means* clear the guilty. His justice shall be honored if all mankind should sink to hell forever. My friend, think of these things, and ask yourself, if it be true that God is just? I have said that the Universalist believes more fully in the justice of God than any other christian on earth. Be not startled. I will attempt to prove it. He believes that *every man shall be rewarded according to his deeds*. He that deserveth many stripes shall receive many, and he that deserves few shall be beaten with few. Is there any thing more just than this? Can there be? Does the Calvinist, does the Arminian, believe as much? They both believe that all men alike *deserve endless misery*, and that if God was *just* to mark and punish iniquity, *all* men must suffer in hell forever! Will all men thus suffer? Very far from it. There are *some means* provided by which a part can escape what they deserve, and what others will actually suffer. Is this *justice?* I need not pursue the subject. All christians, if we except Universalists, place their whole hope of salvation on an idea that they shall by *some means* escape the *just* punishment of their sins. And yet they tell Universalists to remember that God is *just* as well as *merciful*, while in fact they are themselves relying on the mercy of God alone. Is not this inconsistent?

The Psalmist said "Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy, for thou renderest unto every man according to his work," Ps. lxii, 12. Mercy then

is to be ascribed unto the Lord for the reason that he renders to every man as he deserves. But if every man deserves *endless torments*, where is the divine mercy, provided that God renders to every man according to his work? There is none, there can be none. But if he does not thus render unto *every man*, where is the divine *justice?* Universalists believe *sin* to be *finite* as man himself is, and of course to deserve a *finite* punishment. This I know is denied by our limitarian friends, and hence the difficulties in which they are involved. God cannot be *just* and *merciful* too, on their principles. Besides if sin be infinite, that is, if it deserve an infinite punishment, there can be no difference in sins. There can be no *great* and no *little* ones, for all alike must be infinite and deserve, as the Presbyterian creed says, "ALL MISERIES SPIRITUAL, TEMPORAL, and ETERNAL." Does not this confound every idea we have of justice? But God renders unto every man *according to his work*. If he sins *much*, *much* is rendered, if *little*, *little* is rendered. See Luke xii, 47, 48, where this doctrine is plainly taught by our divine master himself. Punishment then must be finite, that is, limited both in degree and duration. God can of course punish a man all he deserves, and yet love him, and yet bless him. Nay this very punishment may itself be regarded in the light of a blessing. Does the good father love the child the less because he punishes it? Does he not rather punish it because he loves it? And is not God as *good* as man? Read, I beseech you, Paul's epistle to the Hebrews xii, 5—11. Nor do these views lead at all to the conclusion which some of our limitarian friends draw from the doctrine, that the sinner, after having suffered what his sins merit, may say to Christ, "Stand by and give me a seat in heaven." Can a son claim the whole estate of his father because he has suffered under his hand for his disobedience? By no means. What claim then has man on the *immortality* and *blessedness* of heaven, founded on the fact that he has suffered for all his sins. That immortality and blessedness is still the free, unbought, gift of God. He has suffered no more than he deserved. Besides Christ we think, never came to save us from the *just punishment* of our sins, but *to save us from our sins themselves*, to turn us away from our iniquities—to destroy death and the devil, and to give happiness through hope here, and impart immortality and bliss beyond the grave.

Let me offer you one proof more of the doctrine of Universal Salvation. In the Epistle to the Philippians, ii, 9, 10, 11, it is said, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on the earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." Look at this one moment; every knee is to bow in the name of Jesus, and every tongue is to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, and so confess too that it shall be to the *glory of God*. Now Paul says in another place, 1 Cor. xii, 3, "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the spirit of God, calleth Jesus accursed, and that no man can say that *Jesus is the Lord*, but by the Holy Ghost." Yet this same Paul, most solemnly declares that *every tongue* shall confess that *Jesus is Lord*. Doing it by the Holy Ghost, it will be to the glory of God the Father.

Are not these considerations that I have now presented, sufficient to justify, or at least to excuse my being a Universalist. But I have insisted on only a few out of the many things I have to say in defence of so glorious and happifying a sentiment. I know it is what you desire true. You pray for it, and can you not believe? Let me say in your own language, "study the Scriptures carefully and prayerfully." I pray God you may come into the enjoyment of this blessed faith.

Before closing this letter, already much too long, I must say a word or two on a few passages of Scripture, which you have quoted, or to which you have alluded.

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" You use this as if it related to a future state of being. I cannot think so. The meaning of the quotation evidently is, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his *life?*" that is *dies* a natural death. The word translated *soul* in this passage, I am told is the same as that translated life in the preceding verse. For whosoever will save his *soul* or *life*, shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his *soul* or *life* for my sake shall find it. This evidently has no reference to a future world.

You also refer to Matt. xxv. The judgment here spoken of was to take place *when* the Son of man came in his glory and all the holy angels with him. Turn now to Matt. xxiv, throughout, but especially 29—35, and you will perceive that Christ was to come in precisely that manner, during that generation in which he lived. See also the last verse of the 16th chap. of Matt. I cannot avoid the conclusion, that the whole of the chap. xxv, relates to events that have already transpired in the destruction of Jerusalem, and the establishment of "the kingdom of Heaven," by which I understand Christianity.

By "outer darkness," I think our Savior means the present *dark* and miserable state of the *Jews*. They were not admitted to the marriage supper of the Lamb, nor are they permitted to partake of the blessings of the Christian dispensation. But by and by they shall. "I would not have you ignorant," says Paul, "of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceit, that ("outer") darkness in part hath happened unto Israel, till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so *all Israel* shall be saved as it is written," &c.

You speak of *eternal death*. I find not that expression, nor any one similar in the Bible. '*Eternal Life*' is its glorious theme, the burden of the New Testament.

My friend, I will now give you a short account of my conversion, to what you no doubt honestly consider, the *dangerous doctrine of Universal Salvation*. We are taught that GOD made us—that *He* is love, and that he knew the end from the beginning. If there is such a place as hell, (I reasoned) in the invisible world, in which to torture and torment the wicked eternally, then GOD *knew* before he made a living soul, who would go to that awful place. I was struck dumb—I could not give such a character to a GOD of love. The devil, who is believed in by so many, and supposed to have such horrible attributes, could not have inflicted a greater curse on the human race. I then examined the law and commandments, to see whether either would justify the popular doctrine of hell, as expounded by modern theologians. I found all the punishment threatened to be of a temporal character. I thought I would see if GOD made HELL. In John's Gospel, it is said. God made all things, and that without Him was nothing made that was made. I then examined to see if hell was made—I found it not. I then began to inquire the meaning of the original words translated Hell, in our English Bible.

I find there are four, viz.—*Sheol*, *Hades*, *Tartarus*, and *Gehenna*, all translated hell. I then read Scott's notes on the 5th chap. and 26th verse in Matt. the first time that hell is found in the New Testament, and he says it is a valley near Jerusalem, where the image Moloch was set up, and where the offscouring of Jerusalem was thrown, and a fire was constantly burning—Hell, but that was in this world. The Rev. J—— H——, a minister of the Reformed Dutch Church, in answer to the question whether Sheol, Hades, or Tartarus meant a place of punishment in another world, replied, no more than they did of blessedness. I then showed him the comments of the celebrated and orthodox commentator Scott, on the word Gehenna, in which he accorded. And I find Sheol and Hades means the earth and grave, Tartarus a rock, and Gehenna a valley, all translated hell in our English Bible.—The Bible says, the righteous shall be recompensed in the *earth much more* the *wicked* and the *sinner*, and *we* which have *believed* do *enter* into rest.

Finally, my dear friend, let us read our Bibles carefully, and see if we do not there find very great and precious promises. I think I have found light and consolation and peace to my soul therein.

W. P.

SOUTH-CAROLINA CONVENTION.

This Conven tion met at the house of George Steedman, Esq. Lexington District, S. C. Nov. 16. 1832. Brs. Joseph W. Summers, Moderator, and Allen Fuller, Clerk. We make the following summary from the proceedings as published in the Magazine and Advocate.

Received the credentials of the delegates, from which it appeared that the following persons were members of the council, who were all present at the session, viz: Elijah Linch and Allen Fuller, ministers, and Edward Hawkins, and Joseph W. Summers, from Newberry society; Robert F. Coleman, John M. Feaster and Iley Coleman, from Fairfield society; Abel Gunter, William Holstun and Elijah Gantt, from Lexington society.

Received of the delegates a statement of the condition of the several societies, which showed that there had been an increase in the number of members during the year past; and that no member had died or left either of the societies during that period.

A Committee was appointed on the subject of a proper method of *receiving* and *dismissing* members, who reported a Constitution, which is to be submitted to the Societies, and may hereafter be published.

On the subject of forming a "General Convention of Universalists in the United States"—*Voted*, in the language of the Pennsylvania Convention, That "we are decidedly in favor of forming the proposed Convention, provided the powers in it vested are only *advisory*."

Appointed Brs. A. Fuller and R. F. Coleman delegates to represent this Convention in the proposed United States' Convention, in person or by letter.

Resolved, That as we have no paper in this vicinity devoted to our cause, it is highly desirable that the publishers of all our periodicals whose works are circulated in this and the adjoining States, should [not only insert the proceedings of this body, but] publish a notice of the meeting of this Convention six weeks, at least, before the time of its session, that the friends to our cause may have seasonable information of the time and place of its meeting.

Resolved, That this Convention recommend to the societies in connexion with this body, that the ordinance of the Communion, or Lord's Supper, be administered in the several societies, as often as they shall respectively determine, as we recognize it as an express command of our Savior. And why should we scruple at complying with an ordinance of his, that we believe obligatory on his followers?

Whereas various tests of fellowship for trying candidates for the ministry have been recently adopted by several associated bodies belonging to the Universalist denomination, therefore, *Resolved*, That this Convention sincerely deprecate the establishing of any tests of fellowship in our order but such as are found in the Scriptures, viz.: 1st. Discipleship, or possessing the spirit of Christ, which is love. 2d. Having a "good report," i. e. sustaining a good moral character. And, 3d. Being "apt to teach," or success in teaching. [See John xii, 35, Rom. vii, 9, Acts vi, 3, 1 Tim. iii, 1—7.]

The Convention adjourned to meet at Betharbara Meeting-house, Laurens District, the 4th Sunday in Oct. 1833. Circular next week.

ANOTHER CONVERSION.

The last Vermont Watchman contains a letter from Rev. Joseph Sylvester, dated Stockbridge, (Mass. we suppose) Dec. 28, 1832, in which he renounces the doctrine of endless misery, and professes faith in the "final restitution of all things." Br. Bell says he knows nothing of the man, only from the letter received, which states that the writer had labored several years in the Methodist connexion.

FROM THE UNIVERSALIST.

It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.' Eccl. vii, 2.

There are particular times and seasons, when we feel the truth and force of those sayings in Holy Writ, which at other times make but a feint impression on the mind. I have often read this passage, and also several sermons and comments upon it; some written to show its propriety, and others, to remove the perplexities which some might suppose it involves. But never before did I see such a practical illustration of it, or feel so sensibly the truth it inculcates, as on a recent occasion. Let sceptics ridicule the revelation of Heaven, and stigmatize its writers; let the giddy and the licentious complain of the harshness and austerity of its precepts, and riot in their midnight cabals of jollity and merriment; but while I see men subject to death, and behold them weeping over the ashes of their departed relatives; and know that I must soon bid adieu to all the scenes of earth, and follow those who have gone before me down the valley; and while the scriptures bid me hope and believe that kindred and friends shall again meet in a world where no trouble can reach them—shall embrace each other, and renew their early friendship, riven asunder by death, I shall heed neither their cavils nor murmurs.

'I'll call them vanities and lies,
And bind the gospel to my heart.'

As I sat this afternoon, in the house of a brother, in rather a contemplative frame of mind, reading the trial of Col. Burr, a carriage came to the door, in which he requested me to take a seat and accompany him to a funeral. The news of a funeral struck me, (as it always does) with a solemnity peculiar to such occasions, and which, a reflection on man's mortality is adapted to inspire. We took our seats and moved slowly along to the place of destination, where we found a little group of friends and relatives, collected to pay the last sad offices to a fellow being. We passed by the room, where lay the corpse in its narrow confines, and several seated around it, whom, by their dress and appearance, I took to be the relatives of the deceased. All were silent, and sat gazing steadfastly upon the monument of mortality before them, and occasionally heaving a deep sigh, which in language too eloquent to be written, bespoke their sorrow, their sympathy, and their humanity.

On beholding the sight, the first thought which struck my mind was, how vain and how empty are all earthly titles and distinctions! How puerile and idle are that praise and veneration, claimed and too often paid to those, whom we call great and powerful. To what do all the petty lines of distinction, which are drawn between the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the black and the white, amount? Death, the great leveller, enters our dwellings, and immediately the prince lies as low as the peasant. One common house, the grave, receives them both, and their spirits return to one God.

But passing up a flight of stairs, we soon entered the chamber where were seated another group of a very different appearance; the sight of which convinced me of my mistake with regard to the persons below; and turned my attention from remote speculation, to kindred and deep felt sorrow. These were the relatives of the dead, sighing and sobbing most bitterly. Every face that I could behold was dressed in sadness, and every countenance indicated a grief not to be expressed. O! how I wished for the power of speaking peace to their wounded hearts! I did for a moment desire (perhaps the desire was impious, if it was I could not help it) the power of Omnipotence; that I could have said as Jesus did to Lazarus, 'come forth,' and have called back to life the object of their affection. But the rules of propriety did not allow me so much as to speak one word of consolation to their aching bosoms; and I held my peace and groaned in spirit.

My mind was again turned to the awful subject of death. O thou horrid monster, thought I, how mighty thy power! how vast thy dominion! how absolute thy reign! Thy claim is universal; thy nature is inexorable; thy desire is never satisfied; thy empire is boundless; thou destroyest every thing thou approachest. What conquest dost thou not boast? What warrior can compete with thee? Thou art victorious over victory itself. The mightiest conquerers are conquered by thee. Though David, and Cæsar, and Titus, and Bonaparte subdued and destroyed the great and the powerful, thou didst conquer them all at last, and lay them as low as those they had slain! Though none ever sing thy praises: though no laurel ever wreathes thy brow; though thy march is silent, and thy council held behind a veil, which no eye can pierce; thou art conqueror and sovereign of all, and every living creature owns thy sway!

But yet, thank Heaven thy reign is short! Thou strikest but a blow, and thy arm is unnerved! Those very ones whom thou dost slay, shall triumph over thee at last! They shall break thine adamantine chains, and show thy reign to have been an usurpation. Remember Mount Calvary, and Jesus on its rugged summit whom thou didst murder with the bitterest tortures! He burst thy hitherto impenetrable barriers; he rent thy veil in twain and shewed us light beyond it! 'Twas he who taught us the consoling truth, that thy pretended claim would be of short duration; that he had converted thy whole empire into an isthmus to connect this world to our immortal home!

But my meditation was soon broken by another object, more affecting than any I had yet seen. I heard the footsteps of one on the stairs weeping so audibly, that, in an instant the attention of all was turned that way. I knew not who it was; but the emotions of sorrow it created, were irresistible. I needed not the command to 'Weep with those who weep.' A stoic could not have forborn. There was not a heart, but that yearned with pity and deep concern. An elderly lady entered the room supported by a friend. Her face was covered with a veil, (for about real and unaffected grief, there is a holy diffidence, it wishes not to attract attention; but chooses the closet or the solitary retreat, where no eye can see it but the Almighty's.) She wept with cries, that would have pierced a heart of steel. And well she might; it was the mother of the deceased. She had come into the chamber to witness the last ceremony over her beloved and only daughter. She was seated in a chair; and leaning forward so far as to hide her face, wrung her hands and wept with an anguish, which cannot be described, and which none but a tender mother can feel. My heart bled as I gazed upon her; and not mine only; for all in the chamber burst into tears. Never can there be witnessed more native and unaffected grief, than was manifested on the part of the relatives; nor more sympathy and humanity by spectators, for a bereaved mother in distress, and a fond husband mourning the loss of an affectionate and beloved wife, who in a few months after their union had been cut down by death. The scene was affecting in the highest degree; it could be felt; but it cannot be described.

The clergyman who administered the funeral obsequies, by whose invitation I was there, soon showed us that his heart was deeply imbued with christian philanthropy; that he was a man of God, worthy of the sacred office he filled, and a comforter of the afflicted. He bore their burdens to the throne of divine grace. He commended the mourners to that God, who is a Father to the fatherless, and the widow's God and husband; who has taught us, 'Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.' All joined with him in the sacred invocation. We felt the virtue of prayer and the Omnipotence of the christian hope. Though we were all melted into tears at his accents, they were not the tears of despondency, but those of reliance and gratitude. At that moment, O! how highly did I appreciate the value of the christian religion! Every thing else faded into nothing before it. Like the sun, in his eternal sphere, it poured a flood of light and comfort on the darkness around it. It illuminated our minds with hope and confidence, and rendered tolerable those heavy loads of sorrow, which without it, would have been insupportable.

Great God, thought I, how excellent, how benign, how glorious, is the gospel thou hast given us! It is all virtue, and purity, and love. It warms our hearts with gratitude, it inspires our souls with the best consolations. Amidst all the trials of life, it is a staff upon which we can lean with satisfaction. And in the last hour of dissolving nature, it is an anchor that takes hold on heaven. It inspirits the soul amidst the vapors of death, and by a holy faith points forward to a pure atmosphere above, to a happy region, where there is no need of the sun, for the glory of God is its light; where all shall join in one endless pæan of praise; where every heart shall beat with gladness and every tongue shall shout for joy. A. C.

SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATION.

MARAH. Exodus xv. 23—25. "From Ayoun Mousa to the well of Howara, we had travelled fifteen hours and a quarter. Referring to this distance, it appears probable that this is the desert of three days mentioned in the Scriptures to have been crossed by the Israelites immediately after their passing the Red Sea, and at the end of which they arrived at Marah. In moving with a whole nation, the march may well be supposed to have occupied three days; and the bitter well at Marah, which was sweetened by Moses, corresponds exactly with that of Howara. This is the usual route to Mount Sinai, and was probably that which the Israelites took on their escape from Egypt, provided it be admitted, that they crossed the sea near Suez, as Niebuhr, with good reason, conjectures.—There in no other road of three days march in the way from Suez towards Sinai; nor is there any well absolutely bitter on the whole of this coast, as far as Ras Mohammed. The complaints of the bitterness of the water by the children of Israel, who had been accustomed to the sweet water of the Nile, are such as may daily be heard from the Egyptian servants and peasants who travel in Arabia. Accustomed from their youth to the excellent water of the Nile, there is nothing which they so much regret in countries distant from Egypt; nor is there any eastern people who feel so keenly the want of good water as the present natives of Egypt. With respect to the means employed by Moses to render the waters of the well sweet, I have frequently inquired among the Bedouins in different parts of Arabia, whether they possessed any means of effecting such a change by throwing wood into it, or by any other process; but I never could learn that such an art was known."—*Burckhardt's Travels in Syria and the Holy Land.*

Meditation and prayer are like the spies that went to search the land of Canaan;—one views, and the other cuts down; and both bring home a taste of the fairest, sweetest fruits of heaven. *Bishop Taylor.*

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE, NEW-YORK, AND ABEL C. THOMAS, PHILADELPHIA.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12, 1833.

SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES,

At the Orchard-Street Church.

Subject for Sunday (to-morrow) evening, 13th, Evidence of Universalism drawn from the Morality of the Gospel. Text Eph. v, i.

☞ I have understood that many persons in this city (Philadelphia,) decline subscribing for the "Messenger," being fearful of a failure in the receipt of the numbers. To allay all apprehension on this subject, I remark, 1st. That the "Messenger" has been published more than a year, and I have, I believe without an exception, received each number on the day of publication. 2d. I have entire confidence in the punctuality of the Publisher, and do hereby guarantee to the subscribers by me obtained, the fulfilment of his contract, so far as they are concerned, and so long as I continue an assistant editor of the work. My residence is 132 Chesnut-street. A. C. T.

WEDNESDAY EVENING MEETINGS.

A course of meetings have been commenced in the Lecture room of the Orchard-st. Church, and will be continued every Wednesday evening. Exercises to commence at 7 o'clock. The primary object is moral and religious improvement. Addresses may always be expected. Friends of the doctrine of God's impartial grace, both Ladies and Gentlemen, are earnestly invited to attend. The meetings will generally be found interesting, and we doubt not profitable. Hereafter they will not be occupied so much with business as they have been.

TRAVELLING AGENT.

We have pleasure in stating that Br. S. J. Hillyer is now travelling on an agency for this Paper, in collecting, and procuring subscribers. He designs visiting the principle places within a convenient distance of this city, during the winter. Any facilties our friends in different places can afford him will be thankfully acknowledged.

THE CONCERT.

It is with great pleasure that we allude to the concert had in the Orchard-street Church, on Thursday Evening of last week. We make no pretensions to musical taste, but think we hazard nothing in saying that the exercises reflected great credit on the performers, and were received with evident pleasure and satisfaction by the very respectable audience present on that occasion.

Mr. E. Willmarth, the leader, deserves much praise for his untiring exertions for a few months past to raise the music in this church, to its present state of comparative excellence. It is beyond all controversy, that it now surpasses every thing of the kind on this side of the town. And we have no hesitation in believing that the numerous congregation which regularly enjoys it, will so appreciate it, as to afford the Choir such countenance and encouragement as to ensure not only the continuance of its exertions but also its further improvement in this delightful and useful art.

We understand it is contemplated repeating this Concert within a few weeks. If so, we shall bespeak a general attendance of our friends and the lovers of Sacred Music. S.

SCRIPTURE EXPLANATION.

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. Matt. ii, 16.

It is hardly necessary to remark that the fact, recorded in the above passage of the Evangelist, has by some been pronounced not only untrue but also absurd. The deliberate cruelty of the conduct ascribed to Herod is thought almost to surpass credibility, and especially since it is not always known, nor generally felt, that there was any motive, and much less one of sufficient strength to incite even a tyrant to the commission of an act so barbarous.

It may not be improper, therefore, to glance at some of the prominent circumstances under which Herod was actually placed, and which, it may be reasonably supposed, influenced his conduct. This will, if we are not mistaken, furnish us with ample reasons for believing that the Evangelist's account is at least highly probable.

1st. Let it be borne in mind, that Herod at the time of these transactions was king of Judea. His crown, however, he had received from the Roman emperor, and still held it in subjection to him. Besides, the character of his administration had been such, together with the fact of his foreign extraction, as to render him an unacceptable ruler to the Jewish people. These circumstances would naturally render him unusually anxious about the preservation of his authority. Add to these, the consideration of his general character, which was that of a rapacious and cruel tyrant, who never scrupled to employ any means however wicked, which he thought might subserve his purposes, and we are prepared to believe that the act here ascribed to him by the Evangelist, was not only possible but under peculiar circumstances altogether in keeping with his common administration.

2d. Let us remember that at this time there was throughout Judea a prevailing and feverish expectation of the Messiah's advent. This fact is more than once incidentally alluded to in the Gospels, and is abundantly proved by the unquestioned testimony of Josephus, Suetonius, and Tacitus. It is well known that the Jews had ascribed to the Messiah the character of a temporal and victorious prince, one who was to break the Roman yoke, and raise their nation to a height of prosperity surpassing what it had ever witnessed.

3d. At this time we should bear in mind, wise men, or Magians, came from the east enquiring, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews: for we have seen his star in the East and are come to worship him?" In ordinary circumstances this would have been sufficient to excite curiosity alone, but in the peculiar situation of Herod is it singular that when he heard these things he was troubled? He felt that he was justly abhorred by the Jews. He knew that the Scriptures foretold a king who was to reign in righteousness. He was fully aware that public expectation had settled upon this time for his birth. And now men, distinguished for their learning and the reverence paid them in their own country, appeared inquiring for this new born king of the Jews, and asserting that they had seen his star. Is it singular, we ask again, that under such circumstances Herod was troubled? His very crown, perhaps his life, was jeopardized. The people were ready to rally round their king, and the conviction that he was their long expected prince, the son of David, and the anointed of God, would render them firm in their attachment to him, and invincible in the field. The anxiety manifested by Herod then was perfectly natural. He gathered the chief priests and scribes, and enquired where Christ should be born. He called the Magians, and dilligently enquired when his star appeared, and commanded them to go and find the child and then bring him word, that he also might go and worship him. His purpose was no doubt fixed, to destroy this hope, and glory, and consolation of Israel.

4th. But when he saw he was mocked, or deceived by the Magians, he sent forth in his rage and slew all the children in Bethlehem and in its dependent district, from two years old and under. That this act was cruel beyond expression is universally conceded, but still it is not discordant with the general character of Herod. The only substantial objection to the account, therefore, arises from the fact that it is not mentioned by contemporary writers. To render this objection the more formidable, Voltaire asserts that fourteen thousand children must have lost their lives in this massacre, and yet Josephus maintains a perfect silence in regard to it. Were this assertion of Voltaire to be taken as true, it would seem improbable that such a slaughter should be made within six miles of Jerusalem and yet no mention of it recorded except by Matthew.

In answer to this assumption, it is only necessary to remark, that Bethlehem is always spoken of as a small place. It is said to "be *little* among the thousands of Judah." Mr. Horne (Introd. Bib. Vol. i. p. 587.) says, "As Bethlehem was a very small place, scarcely two thousand persons existed in it and its dependent district; consequently in the massacre not more than fifty at most could be slain." These the same excellent author thinks, were probably put to death by assassins whom Herod kept in his pay. It should not be thought remarkable therefore, that Josephus does not mention so trifling an act of cruelty in the life of this sanguinary tyrant.

5th. In addition to the preceding remarks we may observe, that the phrase "*from two years old and under*, is doubtless equivocal, and hence liable in this age to mislead us. It is most naturally understood to mean that all the children of Bethlehem and its environs, under two years old, were inhumanly put to death. But is not the phrase in question susceptible of a different explanation? Herod dilligently inquired of the Magians concerning the time when the star, the supernatural token of the young king's birth, had appeared. It must have been impossible that their answer could be so indefinite as to justify a sanguinary order, embracing all the children under two years of age. The only

child, which Herod could have had any object in destroying, must, in all probability, have been born within a few months. Why then massacre all indiscriminately born within two years? This measure, while it would have been wholly useless, must have been attended with far more difficulty and danger.

The phrase, *from two years old and under*, is believed to be susceptible of a much more limited signification than what is above expressed. This will appear by recurring to the Jewish method of reckoning time, "which is," says Dr. Campbell, "to count the imperfect days, months, or years, as though they were complete, speaking of a period begun as if it were ended." This method is illustrated by what is said in relation to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He was to be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, and yet we know that he died late on the afternoon of Friday, and rose early on Sunday morning, leaving scarcely forty-eight hours, during which he was under the power of death. Yet the time embraced a part of three days, which was all the expression, *three days and three nights*, was understood to mean.

Let this be applied to our text. The commission of Herod might not, and probably did not embrace those finishing, but those entering upon their second year. Allowing Christ, then, to have been born, as is generally believed, in December, which was the fourth month in the civil year of the Jews, and granting what is more than probable that the order of Herod was not given for two months afterward, and we may easily perceive the most natural extent of his cruel mandate. It would embrace at most but six or eight months, viz. the children born in the very close of the former year, and those born in the few first months of the following year. If Christ was however born two or three months earlier, as some contend, then it would render the order still more limited, embracing perhaps not more than three or four months. We should remark that the order related only to male children, and this considered in connexion with the preceding observations, reduces the sufferers to so small a number as to account for Josephus' neglect to mention the circumstance, if indeed he was apprized of it. S.

'THE LONG PRAYER.'

In an editorial article, published in the Maine "Christian Intelligencer" of the 28th ult. Br. Drew recommends some alterations in the manner of conducting "Public Worship." He thinks it would be well, were the following order of exercises observed.

"First, an invocation (short) supplicating the divine presence and a preparation for his worship; second, singing; third, reading a portion of scripture; fourth, the long prayer; fifth, singing; and sixth, the Sermon." "as the last performance, always understanding it to be followed by the benediction, and perhaps a doxology or short hymn."

To this long list of exercises, and especially to '*the long prayer*,' I have many serious objections. I think Christians are already too formal in their religious worship. When a minister enters the desk, he proceeds as systematically to pray, as he does to preach, or as does the choir to sing. And 'the long prayer' is frequently uttered, not because the minister is 'in the spirit on the Lord's day,' but because custom requires him, at a particular time, to arise and address the throne of grace.

I question the existence of Divine authority for *public* prayer. And I know of no authority, beside that of custom, for praying, in any manner, at a particular time. '*When* thou prayest, *enter into thy closet*.' And though the Master prayed audibly and in public, it should be remembered that he had no set time for this exercise. His prayers were the effects of *feeling*, and not the fruits of arbitrary regulation. Yet it must needs be, that in the formal observance of public prayer, we must often be liable to the condemnatory sentence, 'This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.'

Should it be contended that the example of Jesus is authority for public prayer, I reply, that if the authority supposed to be furnished thereby be not urged in justification of *formality* in public prayer, the argument is not essentially objectionable. But another reply may be given. Jesus died, 'leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps'—not in the observance of outward rites and ceremonies, but in doing good to our fellow beings.

But I have wandered. Allowing that public prayer is authorized and even expressly commanded, if you please—by what authority do we make *long* prayers? I totally disavow any and all suspicion that 'the long prayer' spoken of in the cited extract, is to be made to be seen of men.' I also disavow any thing like an insinuation that they who make such prayers expect to 'be heard for their much speaking.' I repeat the question; by what authority do we make *long* prayers? Little more than half a minute is required to utter what is called the Lord's prayer, in a distinct manner; and I believe that more than five minutes is not required to repeat any prayer recorded in the Bible.

I hope and believe Br. Drew will not attribute these remarks to a captious disposition. A free interchange of opinion is always desirable especially in relation to religious subjects. A. C. T.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

Having recently read a Sermon from the pen of a very celebrated preacher, who is considered by thousands as highly orthodox; I shall be much gratified by the opinion and remarks of the editors of the Messenger, on the following extract from it. After contending "that God is the cause of the sin which men commit," he winds up his discourse by the following remarks.

"We feel unwilling to leave this subject, till we notice a very popular objection which its opposers urge against it. They say, if this doctrine be allowed, we may do evil that good may come.

In replying to this unwise objection we will ask the opposer to make the trial, that he may convince himself. What has he got to do? He is to do *evil* that good may come. Then his design *in what he does*, must be that good may come. But this very design constitutes his act morally good; *for the moral character of every act is determined by the design of the actor.*"

Your remarks are desired on the whole of the above extract, but your attention is particularly called to the sentiment contained in the last lines. A compliance with this request, will oblige your friend and subscriber. ASPASIO.

REMARKS.

We could wish that Aspasio had given us the name of the clergyman from whose sermon he had quoted. Such opinions are not very common at present, and we are left in doubt whether the author is a contemporary or a writer of "the olden time." The good man, however, seems to have involved himself in mists of his own raising. The force of his argument, if so it is called, is simply this. "My opposer thinks my doctrine licentious, inasmuch as if it be true, it justifies the principle that we may do evil that good may come. But this is impossible, since if our design is to do good it is impossible to do evil. Hence the proposition that we may do evil that good may come, is absurd." But if so what means the Apostle, Rom. iii, 8? The remark, that "the moral character of every act is determined by the design of the actor," is perhaps generally true, but not, we think, without exceptions. Our Savior speaks of those who should think they were doing God service in persecuting christians, and Paul seems to have been one of this very class. Yet neither our Savior nor Paul intimates that the persecutor was thence guiltless. On the contrary Paul says that he was unworthy to be called an apostle because he had persecuted the Church. S.

EXPOSITOR AND UNIVERSALIST REVIEW.

We have received the first No. of this valuable work. Conducted in its usual judicious manner, it is worthy of its editor, H. Ballou, 2d, and worthy of our general cause; and we sincerely hope it may receive such patronage as to ensure its perpetuity. We very much regret, however, one expression which we find in the last article. It was, in our humble opinion, altogether uncalled for, and only calculated to exasperate those to whom it alludes, and injure the feelings of friends. The Expositor is a general work, and we shall protest against any, even the slightest, allusion, to personal bickerings or local difficulties. The expression to which we take exceptions—for we wish to be understood—is the following: "*Their opposition to Universalists is strong and unintermitting.*"—This is said of the Massachusetts Association of Universal Restorationists. If true, it need not have been said, and it leaves us rather to suspect there is a full reciprocity from some at least of that same strong and unintermitting opposition. We hope we shall not have another occasion of the kind wherein we shall feel it a duty to express our decided disapprobation. S.

In our last we inserted a note which we received on the commencement of the new year, enclosing $10. We proposed furnishing five sets of the Messenger to our friend if he would favor us with names. The following communication from him which has just reached us, by an unknown hand, communicates the result of his first effort to procure a reader. The case is not, probably, a singular one. We are grieved in the reflection that thousands are in the same situation. And what a comment does it afford on the professed christian liberality of the present age. Liberal and enlightened views, however, are now making a progress, which all the "frowns" of "Philanthropist's" friend, or those associated with him, can never stay. And we rejoice in the conviction, that the day is not far distant, when a belief in a God of *impartial grace* will not rank its professor with the vilest of the vile, in the estimation of professed Christians, as it too frequently has done. P.

MESSRS. EDITORS—A desire to dissseminate useful knowledge is a sufficient inducement to accept your generous offer to place at my disposal five sets of the Christian Messenger; but previous to the first of January, 1833, I had used my influence to circulate that paper, and it is now in the hands of many of my friends and acquaintance. Yet there are men to whom it would give me pleasure to present it, but it would probably be about as acceptable as witchcraft was to the good people of Salem. However, a desire to see how far superstition and early impressions could affect a good mind, has prompted me to call on one of them. After some common place observations, I presented him a No. of the Messenger. A frown on his countenance told me at once it could have no quarters there. Yet he was my friend, and always had been, and I felt anxious to have him *read* it, if no more—but he was inflexible. After a few minutes conversation he looked me full in the face, with a countenance that bespoke both anger and pity,

and said, "Philanthropist, I am really sorry to see you using your influence in the support of a doctrine so injurious to community." We were by this time fairly at issue. I quoted scripture, but could not convince him. I tried reason, which he heard until he found some difficulty in supporting his argument, and he then concluded that it was only "*carnal* reasoning;" and thus at one fell swoop, settled the question. Carnal reason! What is reason but a faculty which the all-wise Creator bestowed on us, thereby to subdue our passions and enable us the better to judge on all questions. Gentle reader, if men of talents and learning can be so completely hood-winked by a false education, should not great care be taken that the young mind be not tampered with in regard to what it cannot comprehend. It is only teaching them to lisp what they do not understand. Man by nature is a religious being, and if left to his own reflections his reason is sufficient to direct him, if in childhood lie is taught the necessity of moral principle as a rule of action. I say man is naturally religious, for wherever he is found, as the hand of his maker left him, his mind is ever soaring to something superior to himself. However vague his ideas may be, they always show that he leans on something beyond an "arm of flesh." The mind of man, that great and God-like machine, is capable of improvement if properly cultivated; or it may be so clouded and obscured that while we are surrounded by light, we may be enshrouded in profound darkness. And fortunate would it be for man if the evil stopped here. But alas! it too often happens that mental darkness is the primary cause of the grossest wickedness. Thus we see men who were capable of being made useful to themselves and ornaments to society, stalk abroad; monuments of human depravity. PHILANTHROPIST.

ELECTION AND REPROBATION.

We give place to the following, as a specimen of this once prominent and popular doctrine. We know it is now seldom acknowledged, though it is still incorporated in the creeds of a popular denomination, and it is well occasionally to look back and bring to their recollection doctrines which they are ashamed to acknowledge openly, and yet have not honesty (or energy at least) enough to expunge from their creeds.

"The happiness of the elect in heaven, will in part consist in witnessing the torments of the damned in hell, and among these it may be their own children, parents, wives and friends on earth. One part of the business of the blessed, is to celebrate the doctrine of reprobation. While the decree of reprobation is externally executing on the vessels of wrath, the smoke of their torment will be eternally ascending in the view of the vessels of mercy, who, instead of taking the part of those miserable objects, will say amen, hallelujah, praise the Lord."—*Emmons' Sermons.*

ANOTHER NEW MEASURE.

A writer in the last Evangelical Magazine, gives a statement of a recent examination in the Potsdam, St. Lawrence Academy. At the close, a general invitation was given to those present, to a sale, in the Female Department, of a variety of *Toys*, prepared for the occasion, the avails of which were to go to the Tract Society.—While the company were busy in examining the articles, attention was suddenly arrested, by the entrance of a female, the principal Preceptress of the Academy, "carrying in her hand a machine, or wheel for telling Fortunes!"—"Well, my boys," she exclaimed, "the old gipsy has come at last with a bonnet on! Who wants to have their fortune told? We ask only sixpence apiece—who would not give sixpence to take a look into futurity? But you shall have the *privilege* of giving as much as you please." The novelty of the exhibition, and high authority of its introduction, had the desired effect. Customers, mostly young, presented themselves cheerfully, and "took a turn at the wheel."—"My informer," says the writer, "a man of veracity, an eye-witness, and, at the time, a member of the Institution, thinks that but few were confined to the price demanded, but gave from twelve to fifty cents each—that from this source they collected in the course of the day, from the students of the Academy, school children, and others, and put into the 'Lord's treasury' the sum of twenty eight dollars!"

A novel method, truly, of procuring religious funds. How long will community remain the dupes of such management? P.

THE CORRESPONDENCE.

We invite attention to the Correspondence, commencing on our first page, between a member of the Dutch Reformed Church, and a Universalist. Though of considerable length, we doubt not it will be read with much interest—for its mild and christian character, if nothing more. While men will continue to manifest a spirit like that which breathes through the whole of this correspondence, there never will—there never can, arise harm from religious controversy. We suppose it was not designed as a studied argument on either side, but simply as a *friendly* interchange of feelings between *friends*. P.

Original.

Messrs. EDITORS—Conversing lately with a Methodist preacher, I expressed my hope, that even Nero, in God's way and time, would get to heaven, on which he looked at me rather wildly and exclaimed, "If Nero goes to heaven, I desire to be excused from going there." This exclamation drew me into a train of reflections upon the prevailing idea of mankind on this all important subject.

The first question I asked myself was, did the exclamation arise from pride, of from christian humility? My mind was soon satisfied it was from the former, and that from this source arose the most virulent opposition to the salvation of all men. To a man who imagines himself an heir of eternal happiness, while his neighbor is an heir of eternal misery, there is but one alternative—he must either believe it to be his superior goodness which causes the infinite difference, or that his maker is infinitely partial to him. Now such is the constitution of our nature, that either belief will generate pride, while the man of real christian humility, sensible of his own absolute dependance and unworthiness, can discern no reason why his maker should exalt him to heaven, and damn his neighbor to hell. The reason of man at once assents to the scripture doctrine of rewarding every man according to his works, but reason never yet taught any man, that he was infinitely better than the vilest of his own species.

Nero is represented by historians to have been a monster of cruelty; but so is David, so is Mannassah, and even the Apostle Paul himself, had been a murderer. Paul murdered Stephen for preaching the Christian religion, and it appears that Nero murdered Paul for the same thing, and may not the same sovereign and almighty goodness, that extended the hand of pardoning mercy, to David, Mannassah, and Paul, do the same to Nero? And if Paul meets Nero in heaven, will he not be as ready to forgive him, as Stephen will be to forgive Paul? When Nero is raised from the dead, he will like all other men, be raised a new creature, he will then feel no disposition to murder. On the contrary, he will have deep repentance, and godly sorrow for the many murders he committed in this life. When he meets with Paul will he not readily acknowledge his former injustice and cruelty to him, and will it not afford him the greatest satisfaction and consolation to do so, and to receive his hearty forgiveness? Will it not be the same with Paul and Stephen? with David and Uriah? What could David more anxiously wish for, when in deep and godly contrition for the wrongs he had done Uriah, than to meet with him, to confess his wrong, ask his forgiveness, and receive it? And can that which a real pious penitent anxiously desires while here on earth, be a scene unworthy of heaven?

Thousands of poor frail erring men have committed wrongs, have committed murder, and have indulged deep repentance therefor, in the present life. How anxiously would they have flew to find the victims of their injustice and cruelty, to make reparation or confess the wrong and beg forgiveness, while, alas! it is out of their power! Their cruelty has sent them to their graves, and placed them beyond the reach of reconciliation here. Is it not then a subject of great consolation, that the time is coming, when they can do what they now so anxiously wish for?

A future state may rectify all disorders, bring every thing to right, make every thing to harmonize with the works and word of God, without an eternal hell, which some men seem to think, (strange as it may seem,) necessary, in order for the Deity to vindicate his own word, honor and character.

Godly sorrow for sin, is consistent with holiness and happiness, and therefore may exist in heaven. The inhabitants of heaven, must necessarily have a consciousness of past existence, otherwise death would be the same thing to man as annihilation. David will not forget that he had been the murderer of Uriah, and he will have a holy, godly sorrow, for having done so. The following passage in the prophet Isaiah, may serve as some illustration of this subject. "the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear, surely shall say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength, to him shall come, and all that are incensed against him, (or were incensed against him,) shall be ashamed." We cannot find the time when this prophecy shall be fulfilled in this world, and if not, its fulfillment must be in the heavenly state; and if so, there will be shame or sorrow, godly sorrow, in every breast, that has been incensed, that has been in rebellion against its maker. And where is that holy man upon earth—where that true and godly penitent, whose mind would not exult, in such an anticipation, in such a prospect as this? When all mankind raised to an immortal life, shall constitute heaven, and when all heaven shall ring with penitential cries, mingled with songs of holy love, and joy. Z. G.

*** The article of our well known correspondent, H. F. entitled "The Hope of the Christian," will appear next week.

Our fair correspondent, whose second favor will be found in the poetical department of this week, we hope will continue to remember us, as her individual convenience may permit.

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Original.

REVERIES--NO. II.

Addressed to A. M. P. Mass.

BY MISS J. H. KINNEY—SHESHEQUIN, PA.

Thou speakest of fame, and think'st thou then
That hollow praise is ought to me?
Or deemest thou that this heart again
Ambition's slave will deign to be?
Gather me nightshade, let me press
Its deadly nectar to thy lips,
Then may'st thou know the happiness
Of him, who at fame's fountain sips.
"The gift of song"—how can'st thou call
That thing a *gift*, which leaves us nought
To guard us 'gainst the vexing thrall
Of feelings keenly overwrought,
The tyranny of living thought."

And yet it is a gift, although
Hearts often bleed beneath its sway—
A precious gift, I know, I know,
For I have clung from day to day
To its emphatic tones, and felt
(While shrouded in its mystic spell,
And all unconsciously have knelt,
Where light like inspiration fell,
And my 'rapt fancy revelled 'mid
The glorious things of other spheres,
And low, familiar voices chid
The lingering of my spirit's years)
'Twas beautiful tho' steeped in tears.

This is a chain which few perceive,
Tho' it pervades the elements
Of earth and sky—and it doth weave
A spiritual bond, all deeply blent
With high electric sympathy,
Linking each lovely thing to heaven.
'Tis the strong soul of Poetry,
The breath which Deity hath given,
To draw us nearer to the one
Eternal fount of holiness,
As dew-drops gather to the sun.
And oh, the *Giver*—words express
But faint, how we adore and bless.

Almena, we are poor in what
The gay and fashionable cherish,
Earth's glittering toys, but have we not
That wealth of soul *ne'er* doomed to perish?
Ours is the *faultless faith*, which gives
A light to cheer the spirit's gloom,
The *hope*, which gloriously out lives
The startling terrors of the tomb—
And ours, that heaven-born charity,
Which teacheth us to cast aside
The creeds of cold partiality—
Ambition, cruelty, and pride,
All things to vanity allied.

Dearest adieu! We may not meet—
Alas! we may not meet again,
Till heart and pulse have ceased to beat,
And broken is life's weary chain.
Doubt hangs o'er all—but we may turn
To those past beauteous scenes which lie
Sparkling in mem'ry's living urn,
Like night-gems in the deep blue sky,
The breath of flowers, the sounds which creep
With a mysterious murmuring,
Like music o'er the unbroken deep;
They wake that *hope* to which we cling
So eagarly, *Eternal Spring*.

MEMORY.

Painful, and even melancholy as it often may be, how frequently does the mind love to turn back upon the scenes that are gone by. How often are thoughts drawn insensibly as it were, from the darkness of the future to the twilight of the past—to scenes that but faintly glimmer through the cold and sombrous lapse of days, and months, and years! A pleasing melancholy comes over the full soul, as the "green spots on the desert of life" come up before the eye of the imagination, and ties as strong as those of "first love" bind us unconsciously to scenes where once centered all our joys. Such are the reminiscences of childhood and youth, such are the forms pictured upon the sunny surface of the past, when the heart beat joyously—when every path was strewed with flowers—when all above was cloudless sky—and when all around us was sunshine! If ever man enjoys happiness, it is in the spring-time of life, when his hope first begins to bud and blossom. To his illusive eye the future appears bright as the vision of an elysian dream. But soon the frost of disappointment comes, old age "steals along with silent tread"—and all the recollection of enjoyment perishes.

Still memory, like every thing else connected with our worldly enjoyment, has its pleasures and its pains—its joys and its sorrows. The latter too often hold a melancholy predominance. Memory's page is the record of events which have marked our chequered course of life. It is that "simple, unvarnished tale of truth," which reminds us of joys or sorrows that are passed—

> ——"Of hopes deceived—
> Of faded dreams of bliss;
> Of joys we vainly had believed
> Were in a world so drear as this."

It tells of the time when pleasure "led us captive at her car," and when youthful hope, "the music of the mind," tuned to all its charms. The tenor of our past life may have been almost unvarying, yet moments of sadness have sometimes interrupted its evenness, and the memory steals upon us like a dizziness upon the brain. Some object around which our hopes clustered, may have vanished when almost within our grasp. We felt the keenness of disappointment, and even now the remembrance brings sadness to the soul. We may have seen the grave close over those whom we loved, and that grave seemed the sepulchre of our house! It is human nature—it is venial weakness.

WINTER.

Now is old Winter driving over the earth, with his unwelcome attendants. The surly Boreas, more savage than a polar Bear, goes muttering and growling by. Then there are the black winged clouds, crowding in, thicker and more dense; till the sky is shut out, and earth seems canopied with a low heavy ceiling of stone. Then comes the stealthy Snow, with her noisy brother, the driving Hail, knocking and rattling against the window. With them comes the slyest of elves, called, time out of mind, Jack Frost—the little wonder-worker! How he delights to gild over your window pane with his exquisite workmanship! with spire crowned temples of glittering silver, and little spruce warriors in shining armor, with spears and feathery arrows, or he will cover them with mimic vineyards, thick leaved, and seeming almost to stir and quiver, as the blue sky shone in amidst them. Then he will pile up hills, and cover them with the pine and fir; and his sky has its stars and comets, twinkling like the night's!

Go where you will, in a clear cold morning, you may be sure he has been there before you. His printless foot has been to the top of the tallest tree in the wood, and spangled it all over. He has scaled the air-piercing, solitary peak, and looked down upon the eyrie of the boldest eagle. At night, you would think he went up to the very stars and cleared away the shadow of the dim pathway through the air, that their light might come down as pure and sparkling as it issues from its mysterious sources. Then he is abroad in the moonshine, subduing the waters as with a spell; and the restless rough sea lies as quiet and smooth as the plains of the earth!

But his throne is not with us. He retires to the ice-encircled pole, where the breath of no living thing pollutes the pure clear air, and no voice but the awful one of the Storm King breaks the pervading stillness. Here will we leave him—while we return to our own region, cold enough, indeed; but merry with the sounds of life and happiness. The light sleigh skims along over the polished snow, and musical laughter outrings the tinkle of the echoing bells. But chiefly, and preciously dear, are the hours spent in that sanctuary of the heart's holiest and dearest affection—home! When the evening has gathered in with gloom and storm, and the glowing fire sends its cheerful light around the room, and reveals those faces with which every pleasant idea is associated, whose heart does not expand with kindness to his fellow-beings, and thrill with gratitude to that all good Benefactor, who sends blessings with every season? But even from that haven of earthly rest, our home, he calls us away, by the solemn warnings of bereavement; by the vacant places round the hearth; by the memory of those who may never return to fill them; and gives the immortal spirit a longing for another home, where the lost ones may rejoin us, to be separated no more forever!"—*Ladies' Magazine.*

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